

ENDGBV COVID-19 RESPONSE WORK GROUP SUMMARY REPORT

Supporting Survivors of Domestic and
Gender-Based Violence from Crisis through Recovery

July 2020

Key Work Group Takeaways:

(1) Public messaging and resource information needs to be multilingual and culturally specific, and target populations we may not be reaching, including undocumented immigrants, youth, LGBTQ people, older New Yorkers and criminalized survivors.

(2) Delivering services remotely, including mental health services, will continue beyond the crisis, providing an opportunity for long-term enhancements to services, and a critical need to address a digital divide and barrier to engagement that disproportionately affects poor New Yorkers.

(3) COVID-19 has shone a light on domestic and gender-based violence and exposed and exacerbated barriers and challenges survivors have always faced.

(4) The critical need to address how current system responses and reliance on law enforcement are not safe or accessible to communities of color, particularly Black, Brown, immigrant and LGBTQ communities.

On May 7, 2020, Mayor Bill de Blasio launched the ENDGBV COVID-19 Response Work Group to identify and respond to challenges facing survivors of domestic and gender-based violence during the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in over 209,000 confirmed cases in NYC by June 2020.ⁱ As New Yorkers were urged to stay inside to prevent the spread of the virus, there was widespread concern about how sheltering in place with an abusive partner or family member may put survivors at greater risk, further isolate them from support systems, and create an additional barrier to accessing services.ⁱⁱ In fact, when you compare the first week of NYS on PAUSE to the week prior:ⁱⁱⁱ

- New York City Domestic Violence Hotline calls were down by 7.5% (95 fewer)
- Unique requests for domestic violence shelter were down by 10.5% (19 fewer);

The ENDGBV COVID-19 Response Work Group convened weekly (4 times) between May 15, 2020 and June 5, 2020 to identify actionable steps in three areas:

(1) Public Awareness Efforts – explore ways to enhance and adapt efforts to share information and resources, knowing that survivors may have few outlets outside of their homes during COVID-19;

(2) Best Practices for Remote Services – identify best practices in delivering services remotely and explore how the City can support providers during the shift in practice models; and

(3) Survivor Needs – explore ways to enhance and expand existing resource and service systems, with a focus on prevention, disruption, and intervention, to meet survivor needs during COVID-19.

The Work Group members^{iv} included twenty community-based organizations providing multi-disciplinary services across the City, including several serving culturally specific populations; survivors; City agencies, and Councilmember Helen Rosenthal. ENDGBV surveyed New York City Gender-Based Violence Service providers on outreach efforts and remote services during COVID to help inform the Work Group discussions.^v

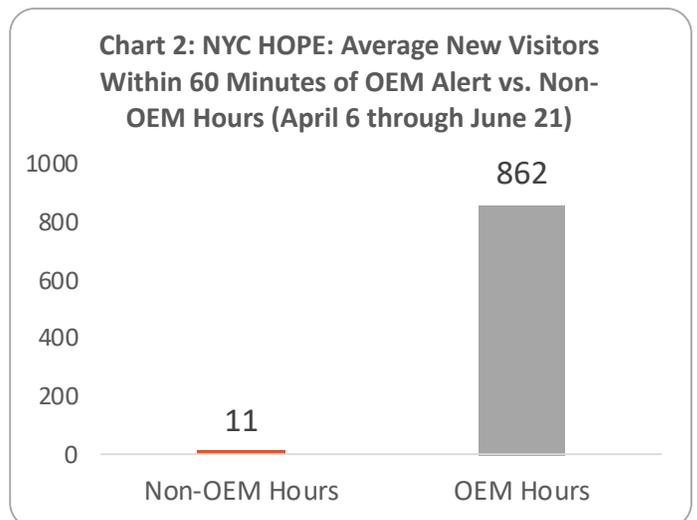
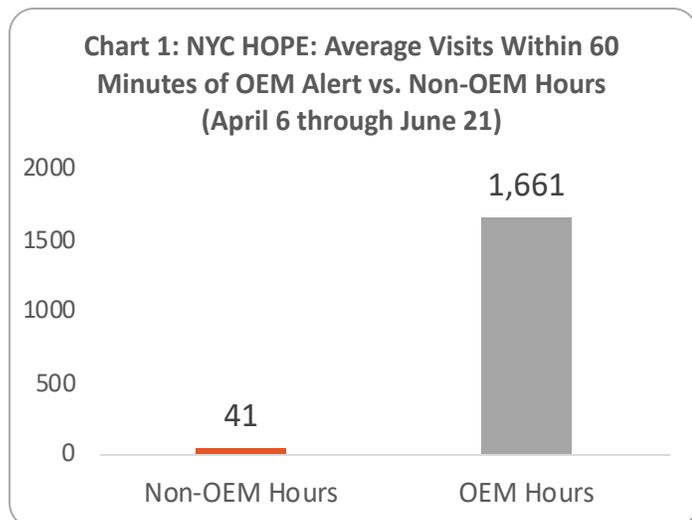
Takeaway 1:

The City’s public messaging and resource information needs to be multilingual and culturally specific, and target populations we may not be reaching, including undocumented immigrants, youth, LGBTQ people, older New Yorkers and criminalized survivors.

To identify successful strategies used during COVID-19 and beyond, the Work Group members discussed the results of a survey of domestic and gender-based violence service providers about their public awareness and outreach efforts, as well as efforts at the City level. On the provider front, the survey found that eighty-eight percent of the respondents (45 out of 51) reported an increase in outreach and public awareness efforts during New York State on PAUSE. For the City, a focal point was the three-phase paid advertising campaign that ENDGBV implemented to share critical information about resources and services available to domestic and gender-based violence survivors during the crisis. The campaign, summarized in the table below, used digital platforms, outreach to essential businesses, and other strategies including texts sent through the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Notify NYC^{vi} program and digital ads placed on Link NYC kiosks that highlighted the City’s NYC HOPE resource directory^{vii} and the 24-hour NYC Domestic Violence Hotline.^{viii}

Table 1: ENDGBV Phased COVID-19 Response Advertising Campaign

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Google Search	Twitter	Pharmacies
Facebook	Instagram	Grocery Stores
Shared Value Media	Convenience Stores	
FLONYC PSA (free)	Check cashing locations	
Notify NYC (OEM)	Laundromats	
	Link kiosks (free)	



ENDGBV amplified the social media campaign by collaborating with local community and educational institutions to highlight NYC HOPE and the NYC Domestic Violence Hotline on their social media platforms. To date, this campaign has correlated to a 277 percent increase in individuals accessing NYC HOPE through Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.^{ix} In addition, First Lady Chirlane McCray released a public service announcement about City resources for survivors on April 15, 2020, that was shared on multiple platforms, including social media and the City’s NYC Life and NYC Gov television channels.^x

The paid advertising and other public awareness efforts resulted in an increase in average daily visits to NYC HOPE to more than 1,100 compared to the 89 average daily visits that NYC HOPE saw in calendar year 2019.^{xi} The average daily number of new visitors also increased to 256 from 42 in calendar year 2019. Similarly, while calls to the NYC Domestic Violence Hotline declined during the first month of PAUSE, since the beginning of April the New York City Domestic Violence Hotline has seen a steady increase in calls. In May 2020, average daily calls increased 22% compared to May 2019. In June 2020, the average daily-unduplicated requests for shelter increased by almost 15% compared to June 2019. See Appendix B for examples of the paid advertising.

The Work Group also provided feedback on how the City should target their public awareness and outreach efforts, expressing concern that some strategies were not reaching all survivors for a variety of reasons, including lack of access to social media, use of different platforms, and language access issues. ENDGBV also shared preliminary data that during NYS on PAUSE, the City’s Family Justice Centers have seen a decrease in contact with some client populations, including: foreign born clients; clients whose primary language is Spanish; and clients who identify as Black, perhaps reflecting a gap in our public awareness and outreach efforts and other barriers to accessing services.^{xii}

Table 2: Change in Percentage of Family Justice Clients Identifying as Foreign Born or Black or Reporting Primary Language Spanish: Comparing COVID-19 (March 18 through June 21, 2020 compared to Calendar Year 2019)

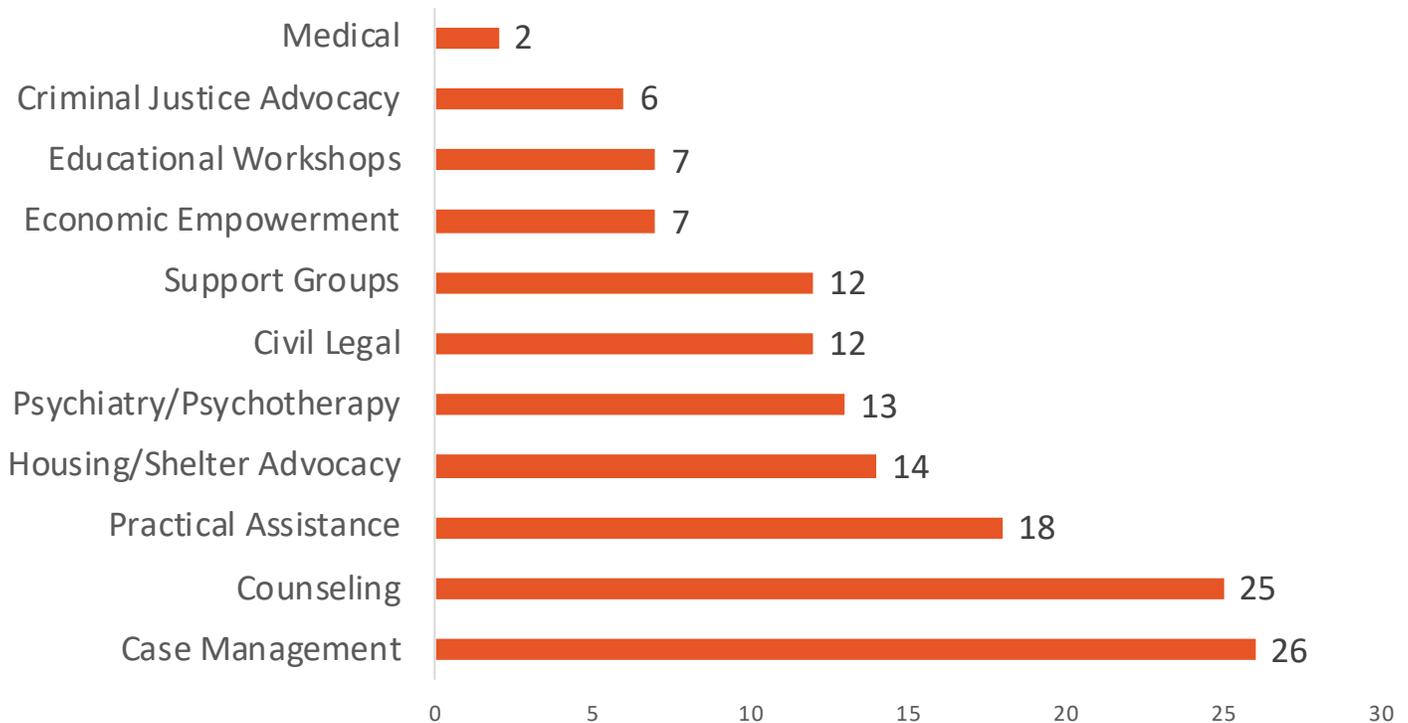
Demographic	COVID-19	CY 2019	Difference
Foreign Born	48.4%	61.3%	-12 points
Black	27.7%	32.2%	-4.5 points
Primary Language Spanish	19.2%	24.7%	-5.5 points

Takeaway 2:

Delivering services remotely, including mental health services, will continue beyond the crisis, providing an opportunity for long-term enhancements to services, and a critical need to address a digital divide and barrier to engagement that disproportionately impacts poor New Yorkers.

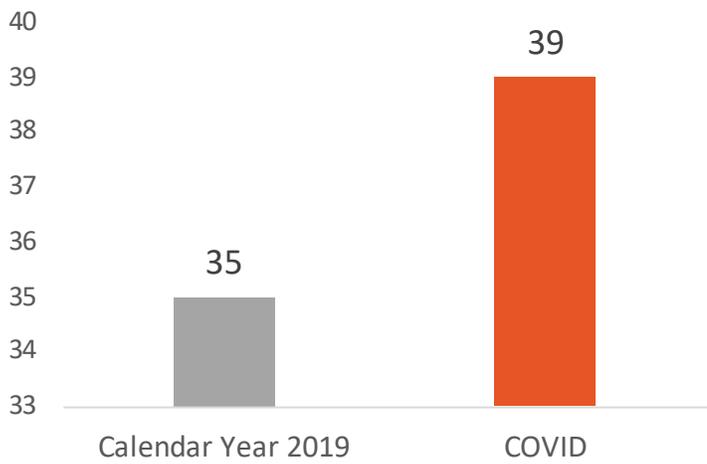
To ground the Work Group's discussion about best practices for remote service provision, ENGDBV surveyed Work Group members and the larger network of domestic and gender-based violence program providers about their transition to remote services. All 45 of the providers that responded reported offering remote services, with 11 continuing to offer in-person services as well.

Chart 3: Best Practices for Remote Services Provider Survey - Most in Demand Remote Services During COVID-19 (n=43)



While providers reported being able to offer many of the in-person services they offered prior to NYS on PAUSE remotely, they have been unable to transition all services to remote models. Some of the major challenges to providing services remotely that providers cited include: clients lacking the necessary technical resources; concerns for client safety; clients lacking necessary technical skills to access services; keeping clients informed; insufficient funding; insufficient staff; and insufficient client contact information to reach clients remotely.

Chart 4: NYC Family Justice Center: Daily Average New Clients Served: Comparing COVID-19 (March 18 through June 21, 2020) to Calendar Year 2019



In addition to the availability of virtual community-based services, the five NYC Family Justice Centers (FJCs) remained open and transitioned to a virtual model through close collaboration with the 40 community-based organizations and City agency partners that had been providing services onsite at the FJCs. Through NYS on PAUSE, the FJCs have continued to operate by phone during regular business hours. From March 18, when the FJCs started virtual services, through June 19, they have served an average of 85 clients per day.^{xiii} Of the 5,600 clients, more than 2,300 were new clients seeking services from the FJCs for the first time. In fact, the average number of new clients served daily between March 18th and June 21st exceeded the average number served during calendar year 2019.

To further enhance remote access to critical resources, the City launched its Text-to-911^{xiv} program on June 2, 2020. Survivors unable to call 911 in an emergency, including the Deaf and those who are sheltering in place in unsafe situations, now have the option to text 911 to request help in English and Spanish.

In response to feedback received by the Work Group, ENDGBV surveyed providers in its NYC HOPE resource directory to determine the remote and in-person services currently provided, as well as the availability of text and chat help lines. This information was combined into a remote service directory that was placed on the NYC HOPE website in May 2020.

Takeaway 3:

COVID-19 has shone a light on domestic and gender-based violence and exposed and exacerbated barriers and challenges survivors have always faced.

Throughout the Work Group's convenings, members discussed how many existing survivor needs had intensified during COVID-19, while also identifying new needs specific to sheltering in place.

Table 3: Three Main Areas of Need Identified by COVID-19 Work Group

Access	Support	Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded access to interpretation services • Enhanced accommodations for disabilities • Community spaces to work and gather • Ongoing and expanded remote court access and assistance with service of papers • Food and practical assistance • Expanded access to healthcare • Access to COVID-19 health information • Safe permanent housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community and family support • Peer to peer support • Support for person(s) causing harm • Help navigating quarantine with person(s) causing harm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to phones, Wi-Fi hotspots, and other devices • Help staying safe online • Remote learning assistance for students • Online public benefits assistance

As one way to understand better the evolving needs of survivors in NYC, ENDGBV analyzed FJC client demographics and service utilization during COVID-19 and solicited feedback from the Work Group members on the needs that have been most palpable for their clients and communities during the crisis. FJCs have seen an increase in demand for the following services: group and individual counseling; child counseling and assessment; and mental health counseling.

Table 4: Services at FJCs Ranked by Most Provided: COVID-19 Compared to CY 2019 (COVID-19 March 18 through June 21, 2020)

RANK	COVID-19	Calendar Year 2019
1	Group/Individual Counseling	Risk Assessment/Safety Planning
2	Risk Assessment/Safety Planning	Case Management
3	Case Management	Civil Legal Services
4	Civil Legal Services	Group/Individual Counseling
5	Child Counseling/Assessment	Crisis intervention
6	Crisis Intervention	Civil legal Advocacy (not attorney)
7	Mental Health Counseling	Custody/Visitation

As COVID-19 highlighted the challenges many low-income New Yorkers have in meeting their basic concrete needs, the City announced a first-of-its kind [relief program](#) for survivors of domestic and gender-based violence.^{xv} In partnership with Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City, ENDGBV is leveraging its network of service providers to distribute funds to directly support survivors experiencing safety, economic, and housing challenges.^{xvi} This micro-grant program, administered by Sanctuary for Families, follows evidence-based funding models that have emerged as powerful economic empowerment tools, particularly helpful in mitigating risk factors for survivors of domestic and gender-based violence.

| Takeaway 4:

It is critical that we address how current system responses and reliance on law enforcement are not safe or accessible to communities of color, particularly Black, Brown, immigrant and LGBTQ communities.

As members of the Work Group met to discuss the crisis of COVID-19, the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Tony McDade drew attention once again to the ongoing crisis of police brutality, violence against the Black community and structural racism that continues to impact so many throughout the City and the country. Work Group members discussed how survivors, particularly Black, Brown, immigrant and LGBTQ survivors who have historically been reluctant to engage with systems, are now even more afraid that they will experience violence as a consequence of reaching out to law enforcement for help. They highlighted the need for new approaches focused on prevention work and holistic, trauma-informed understandings of violence that support survivors outside of the criminal legal system and work to prevent future harm.

This conversation is not new to the field of domestic and gender-based violence, where organizers and advocates of color have spent decades objecting to the criminal legal system's response to survivors most on the margins and developing restorative and transformative approaches that engage survivors, families and communities outside of that system. In fact, in 2018, the City announced its *Interrupting Violence at Home Initiative*, which includes a blueprint for incorporating restorative justice practices into existing intimate partner services as well as non-mandated programming for engaging people who cause harm in community-based settings and will continue to explore non-criminal justice legal options for survivors and their families. It is particularly important for the City to engage its provider community as we respond to this critical moment, and ENDGBV will convene our stakeholders to continue this important conversation in the months to come.

Moving Forward

ENDGBV has the opportunity every day to partner with an incredible community of domestic and gender-based violence service providers, survivors and stakeholders across New York City who work tirelessly to support survivors. The leading voices representing that community in the COVID-19 Response Work Group brought real-time feedback during an unprecedented crisis amidst their own individual and organizational demands to identify gaps in engagement and service provision and critical proposals for how we can do more and better in our response to domestic and gender-based violence in the City. ENDGBV will continue to integrate and build upon the Work Group’s important feedback and ideas. Key examples of next steps related to the Work Group’s four main takeaways are below.

Key Takeaway #1	Key Takeaway #2
<p>Continue investing in paid advertising, both through social media and print messaging in essential businesses like groceries and pharmacies, with a particular focus on reaching underserved populations, including undocumented immigrants, LGBTQ+ people, and communities of color</p> <p>Use focus groups consisting of providers and survivors to continue to get feedback on messaging</p> <p>Employ data-driven insights to inform outreach and create targeted messaging</p>	<p>Enhance the availability of text/chat options for survivors to access services</p> <p>Enhance collaboration with City agency partners to identify safe spaces for survivors to access virtual services and use technology safely and confidentially</p> <p>Collaborate with tech partners and explore public/private partnerships to improve survivor and provider access to technology</p> <p>Continue to develop best practices tip sheets and provide other training and technical assistance for remote service provision</p> <p>Work with the NYC Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DoITT) to incorporate remote services information into the existing web-based searchable neighborhood resource directory on NYC HOPE</p>
Key Takeaway #3	Key Takeaway #4
<p>Continue to partner with the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City to explore public/private partnerships to support survivor needs</p> <p>Partner with survivors to continue identifying and understanding survivor needs including through co-hosting survivor-led town halls in multiple boroughs</p> <p>Leverage the existing network of survivor leaders to explore peer-based models that may include economic empowerment for survivors</p>	<p>Explore ways to shift the impact of funding to underserved communities to provide culturally specific neighborhood-based assistance outside of the criminal legal system</p> <p>Continue to develop innovative programs, including abusive partner interventions, outreach to people who cause harm and restorative justice practices</p>

Note from ENDGBV Commissioner Cecile Noel

I would like to give special thanks to the Work Group members for their participation in this project and their enduring partnership in our collective work to end domestic and gender-based violence, especially as we navigate the challenges presented by the COVID-19 crisis. COVID-19 has reinforced the critical importance of our work, and of taking care of our most vulnerable New Yorkers. As we continue to forge a path forward through the uncertainty of this health crisis let this time spent together remind us there is strength in numbers. Together, we continue to tell survivors they are never alone.

Appendices

Appendix A: Members of the Work Group

Work Group Members and City Agency Attendees	
<p><i>Administration for Children’s Services, Shanelle Bolton, Dale Joseph & Rachael Jensen</i></p> <p><i>Anti-Violence Project, Darlene Torres</i></p> <p><i>Arab American Family Support Center, Nancy Albilal</i></p> <p><i>Barrier Free Living, Paul Feuerstein</i></p> <p><i>Columbia University Medical Center, Betsy Fitelson</i></p> <p><i>CONNECT, Sally MacNichol</i></p> <p><i>Crime Victim Treatment Center, Christopher Bromson</i></p> <p><i>CUNY Law, Julie Goldscheid</i></p> <p><i>Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Catherine Stayton</i></p> <p><i>Her Justice, Anna Maria Diamanti</i></p> <p><i>Department of Social Services, Human Resources Administration, Annette Holm</i></p> <p><i>Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice, Shekera Algarin</i></p> <p><i>Mayor’s Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Logan Phares</i></p> <p><i>New York City Council, Councilmember Helen Rosenthal</i></p> <p><i>New Destiny Housing, Carol Corden</i></p>	<p><i>New York Legal Assistance Group, Amanda Beltz</i></p> <p><i>Office of Deputy Mayor Henze, Megan Tackney</i></p> <p><i>Office of First Lady Chirlane McCray, Dabash Negash & Grace Choi</i></p> <p><i>Safe Horizon, Liz Roberts</i></p> <p><i>Sanctuary for Families, Judy Kluger & Jennifer Friedman</i></p> <p><i>Shalom Taskforce, Shoshannah Frydman</i></p> <p><i>Rising Ground, STEPS to End Family Violence, Anne Patterson</i></p> <p><i>Sunshine in my Living Room, Doreen Lesane</i></p> <p><i>Urban Justice Center, Madeline Garcia Bigelow</i></p> <p><i>Urban Resource Institute, Nathaniel Fields</i></p> <p><i>Voices of Women, Raquel Singh</i></p> <p><i>VOICES, Doreen Jones</i></p> <p><i>Violence Intervention Program, Carmen Beltre</i></p> <p><i>Weinberg Center for Elder Justice, Tristan Sullivan-Wilson and Deirdre Lok</i></p> <p><i>Womankind, Yasmeen Hamza</i></p>

Appendix B: ENDGBV COVID-19 Paid Advertising



NYC HOPE

FLY-012-E (6/2019)

www.nyc.gov/NYCHOPE

1-800-621-4673 (HOPE)
TTY 1-866-604-5350

We understand home is not always safe. Get information and resources to help you or a loved one experiencing dating, domestic, gender-based or family violence.

In an emergency, call 911.

نحن نفهم أن المنزل قد لا يكون آمناً على الدوام. احصل على معلومات وموارد لمساعدتك أنت أو أي من شخص تعرفه في حالة التعرض للتعنف في عائلة مواعدة أو العنف المنزلي أو العنف القائم على النوع الجنس أو العنف العائلي.

في حالة الطوارئ، اتصل على 911

আমরা বুঝি যে বাড়ি সবসময় নিরাপদ নয়। আপনি অথবা কোনো প্রিয়জন, বন্ধু বা পরিবারিক সহসংসার শিকার হলে, তাদের সাহায্য করার জন্য তথ্য ও সংকলন পান।

জরুরি অবস্থায় 911 নম্বরে ফোন করুন।

Entendemos que estar en casa no siempre es lo más seguro. Obtenga información y recursos que le ayudarán a usted o a un ser querido si está sufriendo violencia en el noviazgo, violencia doméstica, violencia de género o violencia familiar.

En caso de emergencia, llame al 911.

Nous savons que nous ne sommes pas toujours en sécurité chez nous. Obtenez des informations et des ressources pour recevoir de l'aide ou aider l'un(e) de vos proches en cas de violence dans les fréquentations, de violence domestique, familiale ou sexiste.

En cas d'urgence, appelez le 911.

Nou konprann kay ou pa toujou an sekirite. Jwenn enfòmasyon ak resous pou ede oumenm oswa yon moun pwòch ou ki sibi vyolans nan renmen, nan kay, vyolans seksis oswa vyolans familial.

Nan yon ka dijans, rele 911.

집이 언제나 안전한 곳이 아니라는 것을 알고 있습니다. 데이트 폭력, 가정 폭력, 젠더 기반 폭력 또는 가족 폭력을 겪고 있는 귀하나 사랑하는 사람을 도움 정보와 자원을 알아보십시오.

비상시에는 911 로 전화하십시오.

Rozumiemy, że dom nie zawsze jest bezpieczny. Uzyskaj informację i materiały, aby pomóc sobie lub ukochanej osobie doświadczającej przemocy w relacji intymnej, przemocy domowej, na tle płciowym lub przemocy w rodzinie.

W nagłych wypadkach zadzwoń pod 911.

Мы понимаем, что дом не всегда является безопасным убежищем. Получите информацию и ресурсы, чтобы помочь себе или близким, которые столкнулись с бытовыми или гендерными насилием, насилием в семье или во время свиданий.

В случае экстренных ситуаций, звоните 911.

ہم اسی بات کو سمجھتے ہیں کہ گھر ہمیشہ محفوظ نہیں ہوتا۔ آپ یا آپ کا کوئی عزیز ڈشنگ، گھریلو، صنف پر مبنی یا خاندان کے ذریعہ تشدد کا شکار ہے تو مدد کے لیے معلومات اور وسائل حاصل کریں۔

ایمرجنسی میں 911 پر کال کریں۔

我們理解，家並非永遠是安全的港灣。當您或您的家人遭受約會暴力、家庭暴力或性別暴力時，請積極獲取信息和資源來保護自己或家人。

緊急情況下，請致電 911。

我們瞭解家並非總是安全的，請獲取資訊和資源，以便您或您的親人在連續約會、家庭、性別相關或家人的暴力時，獲得幫助。

緊急情況下，請致電 911。

NYC Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence
@nycagainstabuse #awarenesshelphope

POST-001-E (12/2019)

NYC HOPE



Get information and resources to help you, or a loved one experiencing dating, domestic, or gender-based violence.

www.nyc.gov/NYCHOPE

Call NYC's 24/7 hotline for immediate safety planning, shelter assistance, and other resources: 1-800-621-4673 (HOPE); TTY 1-866-604-5350.

In an emergency, call 911.

NYC Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence

@nycagainstabuse #awarenesshelphope

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- i. "COVID-19: Data," NYD Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), accessed June 22, 2020, <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-data.page>.
 - ii. Chandan, Joht Singh, Julie Taylor, Caroline Bradbury-Jones, Krishnarajah Nirantharakumar, Eddie Kane, and Siddhartha Bandyopadhyay. "COVID-19: a public health approach to manage domestic violence is needed." *The Lancet Public Health* 5, no. 6 (2020): e309, [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667\(20\)30112-2/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667(20)30112-2/fulltext).
 - iii. Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's "New York State on PAUSE" executive order included a directive for all non-essential businesses statewide to close in-person operations starting 8pm on Sunday, March 22, 2020.
 - iv. Please see Appendix A for member information.
 - v. ENDGBV conducted two surveys of gender-based violence service providers regarding Best Practices for Remote Services during NYS PAUSE and Public Awareness and Outreach During New York State PAUSE. More information on the surveys can be obtained from ENDGBV by e-mailing Ehill@cityhall.nyc.gov.
 - vi. As part of New York City Emergency Management (NYCEM), Notify NYC is New York City's dedicated emergency public communications program.
 - vii. NYC HOPE, Home Page, accessed June 22, 2020, <https://www1.nyc.gov/nychope/site/page/home>.
 - viii. SafeHorizon, Home Page, accessed June 22, 2020, <https://www.safehorizon.org/hotlines>.
 - ix. Change in average daily visits accessing NYC HOPE via Twitter, Facebook and Instagram (comparing time period 4/1/2020 to 6/21/2020 to CY 2019).
 - x. NYC HOPE, First Lady Chirlane McCray, April 15, 2020, <https://www.facebook.com/NYCFirstLady/videos/nyc-hope/798375157354425/>.
 - xi. Change in average daily visits accessing NYC HOPE comparing time period 3/18/2020 to June 21, 2020 to Calendar Year 2019.
 - xii. FJCs are co-located multidisciplinary service centers, situated in the five boroughs, providing vital social services, civil legal, and criminal justice assistance for survivors of domestic and gender-based violence and their children.
 - xiii. The figures were calculated through June 21, 2020.
 - xiv. "Text-to-911," City of New York, accessed June 22, 2020, <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/text911/index.page>.
 - xv. "Mayor de Blasio Announces Emergency Relief Program for Survivors of Domestic and Gender-Based Violence," City of New York, May 21, 2020, <https://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/367-20/mayor-de-blasio-emergency-relief-program-survivors-domestic-gender-based>.
 - xvi. Funding for this program is provided by the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City's COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund.



NYC[®] Mayor's Office to
End Domestic and
Gender-Based Violence